



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa Fishing Report

Conservation and Recreation



FISHING

Ten categories of angling fun.

FRENZY!

[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of April 26.](#)

This weekly fishing report is compiled from information gathered from local bait shops, angler creel surveys and county and state parks staff. For current information, contact the district fisheries office at the phone number listed at the end of each district report.

- [NORTHWEST](#)
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NORTHWEST

[Black Hawk Lake](#)

Water temperatures are in the mid 50's. Expect fishing to pick back up as water continues to warm. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use waxworms and crawlers in the marina. Action has slowed a bit, but a few have been picked up in Town Bay, along Ice House Point and from the inlet bridge. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Use crawlers and minnows fished from shore and the floating dock. **Walleye** - Slow: Expect walleye shore fishing action to pick up as water temperatures gradually warm. Fish a minnow or leech under a bobber or throw a twister along the Ice House Point shoreline, North Shore, and East Shore near the outlet.

[Storm Lake \(including Little Storm Lake\)](#)

Water temperature is in the mid 50's. **Walleye** - Fair: Throw twisters or fish minnows under a bobber from the state marina. Decent walleye action along the north shore near Chautauqua Park. **White Bass** - Fair: Anglers are having luck fishing from shore on the

east side and from the marina. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Catch crappie from the marina using minnows and a twister.

Action should pick up as water temperatures continue to warm up. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

Beeds Lake

Beeds Lake is ice free.

Clear Lake

Clear Lake is about 95 percent ice free. Water temperature is 46 degrees. The docks are in at the city beach ramp and the Island boat ramp. **Black Crappie** - Good: Crappies are biting in the cannels and fishing off the jetties. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleyes are starting to bite near the outlet. Best time to fish is after sunset. Be aware - DNR staff have nets set in this area.

Crystal Lake

Crystal Lake is about 95 percent ice free.

Lake Cornelia

Lake Cornelia is ice free. The docks at the boat ramp are in.

Lower Pine Lake

The docks at the boat ramp are in.

Upper Pine Lake

The docks at the boat ramp are in.

For information on the lakes and rivers in the north central area, contact the Clear Lake Fish and Wildlife office at 641-357-3517.

East Okoboji Lake

Channel Catfish - Good: Ice out brings excellent channel catfish fishing as catfish go on a feeding frenzy. The north end of the lake and bridges has extensive open water. Fish these areas for some early "pole bending" action.

Silver Lake (Palo Alto)

Silver Lake is open. Report of boat traffic last weekend. **Walleye** - Fair: Numbers of fish are reported caught.

Ice is receding from the Iowa Great Lakes. Open water exists at the bridges and the north end of East Okoboji, Minnewashta, Upper and Lower Gar Lakes. For more

information throughout the week, contact the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery at 712-336-1840.

NORTHEAST

Cedar River (above Nashua)

Water clarity is improving slowly. Water levels up but stable. Visit the [USGS Current Water Data website](#) for current water level information. **Walleye** - No Report: Walleye bite slowed down a lot with rise and low visibility. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Catch catfish in the impoundments with dead chubs fished on bottom.

Decorah District Streams

Area trout streams are in good condition. Catchable trout are stocked weekly as weather and water conditions permit. Listen to the trout stocking hotline (563-927-5736) for daily plans. Plan a trip to your favorite trout stream. Check out [this year's trout stream stocking calendar](#). **Brook Trout** - Good: Use a streamer to mimic minnows or subsurface flies like scuds or pheasant tail nymphs. **Brown Trout** - Good: Insect hatches are on the rise, especially in the afternoons. Use small midge, caddis, or flashy streamer patterns. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Float a feathered spinner or crankbait past a freshly stocked fish. A piece of worm under a bobber also works in the deeper holes.

Lake Hendricks

Ice went off earlier this week. Water levels are up and the water is off color. **Black Crappie** - No Report: The bite should improve as water temperature warms.

Lake Meyer

Anglers are out, but the bite is slow. The boat dock is out.

Upper Iowa River (above Decorah)

Water clarity is poor, but improving. Water is bank full, but is currently stable. Water temperatures are rising. **White Sucker** - Slow: Bite should improve with warmer temperatures. Use worms fished on the bottom.

Upper Iowa River (below Decorah)

Water levels are relatively stable, but clarity is poor. Visit the [USGS Current Water Data website](#) for more information.

Volga Lake

Anglers are enjoying the sun and dunking worms. Docks are in. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Shallow, warmer areas are more productive. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Use a shallow jerk bait with slow retrieve.

Spring is finally here - just in time for the weekend. Temperatures are reaching low 60s for highs, staying above freezing at night. Turbid and high water levels on area rivers and streams. For current fishing information, please call the Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

[Cedar River \(Nashua to La Porte City\)](#)

River levels remain high and muddy. Anglers are very well catching channel catfish. **Channel Catfish** - Excellent: Use cut bait.

[Heritage Pond](#)

Heritage Pond was stocked April 14th with both rainbow and brook trout. Trout fishing should be good; the weather forecast looks to be more of average seasonal temperatures next week. **Brook Trout** - Fair: Cast and retrieve flashy spinner baits like a panther martin jig or similar jigs and spinners. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Cast and retrieve flashy spinner baits like a panther martin jig or similar jigs and spinners.

[Maquoketa River \(above Monticello\)](#)

Reports of anglers catching walleye, smallmouth bass, channel catfish and even an occasional trout on the Maquoketa River in Delaware County. The river remains up a bit, but clarity is not bad. **Walleye** - Good: Cast and retrieve a jig with plastics tipped with a minnow. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair: Cast and retrieve a jig with plastics tipped with a minnow. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Try cut bait fished on the bottom.

[North Prairie Lake](#)

Reports of anglers catching trout. Trout fishing should be good; the weather forecast looks to be more of average seasonal temperatures next week. **Brook Trout** - Fair: Cast and retrieve flashy spinner baits like a panther martin jig or similar jigs and spinners. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Cast and retrieve flashy spinner baits like a panther martin jig or similar jigs and spinners. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Cast artificial crankbaits.

[Shell Rock River \(Greene to Shell Rock\)](#)

The Shell Rock River has been high and muddy, but is starting to drop in water levels. No fishing reports for this week.

[Wapsipinicon River \(Tripoli to Troy Mills\)](#)

No reports on the Wapsipinicon River as the river continues to rise and remains muddy. It may be the perfect time to try for some catfish on the backwater areas of the river. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Use cut bait fished on the bottom.

Few fishing reports this past week as interior rivers are high and muddy from recent precipitation. Trout stream stockings continue and streams remain in good

condition. There have been few reports of crappie being caught on area lakes. Call the N.E. Iowa district office at 563-927-3276 for more information.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

Mississippi River Pool 9

River level at Lansing is still rising at 10.4 feet and is expected to reach 13.4 feet this week. Water temperature is near 50 degrees. Look for backwaters and areas of lesser current away from the main channel that concentrate fish. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleye bite should pick up after spawning. Look for alternate areas to fish as the tailwaters have a lot of current. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: Perch are still in spawning areas along the rocky shorelines and near the tailwaters of the dam. Expect the bite to pick up again once temperatures rise. **Sauger** - Slow: Sauger are in spawning mode, but the recent cool down in water temperatures will prolong the spawn. **Northern Pike** - Slow: Pike spawn is ending; anglers report catching some nice pike with live bait.

Mississippi River Pool 10

River level at Lynxville has come up several feet to 20.1 feet with a steady rise to 23.6 feet expected. Water temperature is 51 degrees. Look for backwaters and areas of lesser current away from the main channel that concentrate fish. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleye bite should pick up after spawning. Look for alternate areas to fish as the tailwaters have a lot of current. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Perch are still in spawning areas along the rocky shorelines and near the tailwaters of the dam. Expect the bite to pick up again once temperatures rise. **Sauger** - Fair: Sauger are in spawning mode, but the recent cool down in water temperatures will prolong the spawn. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike spawn is ending; anglers report catching some nice pike with live bait.

Mississippi River Pool 11

River level at Guttenberg has risen to 11.1 feet with a steady rise to 14.6 feet predicted. The gates are all up at the Lock and Dam. Water temperature is 51 degrees. Look for backwaters and areas of lesser current away from the main channel that concentrate fish. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleye bite should pick up after spawning. Look for alternate areas to fish as the tailwaters have a lot of current. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Perch are still in spawning areas along the rocky shorelines and near the tailwaters of the dam. Expect the bite to pick up again once temperatures rise. **Sauger** - Fair: Sauger are in spawning mode, but the recent cool down in water temperatures will prolong the spawn. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike spawn is ending; anglers report catching some nice pike with live bait.

The Upper Mississippi River is on the rise with snow-melt from up north. Water clarity is diminishing as levels rise. The bite has improved this week with water temperatures

jumping into the 50's. Expect a fast warm-up and increase in fish activity as temperatures rise.

Mississippi River Pool 12

Water levels are rising and presently at 9.7 feet at the Dubuque Lock and 11.5 feet at the RR Bridge. Levels are up from last week, and will continue to rise all week. The channel water temperature is around 46 degrees. **Yellow Perch** - No Report: Some scattered reports of ring perch catches earlier, but not many people out fishing for them. **Northern Pike** - No Report: The pike spawn is late this year due to the weather; they might be still spawning some. Once done, pike can go on a good bite. Try flashy spinners. **Walleye**- Fair: Fishing picked up a bit this week. Most anglers are using crankbaits. Some walleyes may still be spawning.

Mississippi River Pool 13

Water levels at Bellevue are 10.8 feet and are rising. Both Bellevue City ramp and the DNR ramp are open, but no courtesy dock is available yet at the DNR ramp. Paddlefish season is over for the year. The channel water temperature is around 48 degrees. **Paddlefish** - No Report: Paddlefish season is closed for the year. **Sauger**- Slow: Hit or miss. Some reports of sauger being caught. Most are being taken on minnow rigs. **Walleye** – Fair: Nice slot fish are occasionally reported, but fishing is slow. Pulling crank baits is the most consistent method. **Largemouth Bass** - No Report: Expect the bite for bass and panfish to really start to pick up this week.

Mississippi River Pool 14

Water levels are rising and are 9.7 feet at Fulton, 12.6 feet at Camanche and 7.3 feet at LeClaire. The water temperature is around 50 degrees. Paddlefish season is now closed. **Paddlefish** - No Report: Paddlefish season is closed for the year. **Walleye** - Slow: Walleye had an extended spawn on the Mississippi River this year. Some are being taken on crankbaits mostly in the tailwater area. **Largemouth Bass** - No Report: Expect the largemouth bass fishing to really pick up this week. Fish the newly flooded areas in the backwaters as the water rises this week.

Mississippi River Pool 15

Water levels are 9.8 feet at Rock Island. Water levels are up from last week and will be on a steady rise this upcoming week. Conditions are still favorable for angling.

Expect a significant water rise this week throughout the district. Water temperatures have reached 50 degrees in some places. Paddlefish season is closed for the year. If you have any angling questions, please contact the Bellevue Fisheries Station 563-872-4976.

Mississippi River Pool 16

Tailwater stage is 10.71 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities and has been rising the past few days. There has been some walleye and sauger fishing in Sylvan Slough. **Walleye** - Fair: Some walleyes are being caught in Sylvan Slough with jigs and plastics. Try fishing around the outflows by the power dam and Arsenal Dam. **White Crappie** - Fair: Use waxworms or minnows under a bobber in Sunset Marina. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use waxworms under a bobber in Sunset Marina.

Mississippi River Pool 17

Tailwater stage is 9.46 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and has been rising the past few days. River stage is forecasted to reach 12.3 feet by the middle of next week. Flood stage is 15 feet. **Walleye** - Slow: Look for walleyes in the tailwaters or down by GPC. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with stick baits. **White Crappie** - No Report: Look for crappies in the backwaters. Use jigs and plastics or minnows under a bobber in Big Timber or Cleveland Slough.

Mississippi River Pool 18

Tailwater stage is 11.27 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston and is rising. The gates are out of the water at the dam. River stage is forecasted to reach 13.6 feet by the middle of next week. Flood stage is 15 feet. We have not received any fishing reports for this pool this week. **White Crappie** - No Report: Look for crappies in the backwaters. Try jigs and minnows or minnows under a bobber around brush piles.

Mississippi River Pool 19

Tailwater stage is 7.47 feet at Lock and Dam 18 above Burlington and is rising. River stage is forecasted to reach 9 feet by the middle of next week. Flood stage at Lock and Dam 18 is 10 feet. We have not received any fishing reports for this pool this week.

River stages have been on the rise the past few days. Main channel water temperature has risen to 52-53 degrees. We have not received much for fishing reports this week. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19, contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

Big Hollow Lake

Water temperature is up to 50 degrees the last couple of days. Just need some warm days to get it going up to normal. Very little angler activity because of the weather.

Environmental Discovery Park North Pond

Rainbow Trout - Fair: Still plenty of trout left from this Spring's stocking. Pick a nice warm days and go catch a limit.

Lake Belva Deer

Water warming up a little, but the fishing remains slow. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: A few are getting picked up in the deeper water. Try on the upper end of the lake around the mounds.

Lake Darling

Water temperature is up to 54 degrees after several days of 70 degree weather. Water clarity is good 6+ feet. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Crappies are starting to move to shallow water to feed. The spawn is still several weeks out. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Anglers are starting to catch bass in shallower water. Still have to work them pretty slow. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Anglers are catching some nice stringers of catfish, mostly using nightcrawlers.

Lost Grove Lake

A few anglers have been out. Cold, windy weather doesn't make for the best fishing weather. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: With the warmer weather, the bass are starting to move in shallower to feed. Work the rip rap and jetties on the North side of the lake. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Crappies are starting to move shallow to feed; concentrate efforts on the North side bays and along the rip rap where the water is warmest.

For more information on the above lakes, contact the Lake Darling Fisheries Office at 319-694-2430.

Central Park Lake

The lake is currently drained as a renovation project is finishing up this spring.

Coralville Reservoir

The lake is at normal spring pool of 679.4 feet. Boating above Lake Macbride Park is not recommended at this water level. **Channel Catfish** - Slow: Try cut bait in the channel; above Mehaffey bridge is best. **White Crappie** – Slow.

Diamond Lake

No minnows are allowed here. The fish cleaning station is open. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Try small jigs fished around the rock jetties or brush piles. Most fish are 8-9 inches.

Kent Park Lake

The lake is currently drained for a lake renovation project currently underway. It is scheduled to be completed next spring.

Lake Macbride

Water temperatures are in the low to mid 50's. All boat docks are in. All motor sizes may be used at no-wake speed (5 mph). **Black Crappie** - Fair: Some fish have moved to shallow structure while others remain over deeper trees. There are lots of 10-12 inch crappies in the system. **Walleye** - Slow: Smaller males are still in the shallows for the

spawn, while most females are deeper, waiting to spawn or recovering from spawning. Fishing should improve once the spawn is done.

Otter Creek Lake

Not much fishing activity here yet. The fish cleaning station should be open for the weekend.

Pleasant Creek Lake

The lake is still 7-8 inches low from the restoration project. The main ramp is usable, but it is shallow; use caution. There is a boat dock in on the east lane. Be cautious when boating as new structures have started to be submerged. Water temperatures this week were in the low 50's. **Walleye** – Slow. **Muskellunge** – Slow.

Prairie Park Fishery

Iowa residents and nonresidents who are required to have a fishing license must pay the Trout Fee to fish for or possess trout. Exception: Anglers under 16 years old may possess or fish for trout without having paid the Trout Fee if they fish with a properly licensed adult who has paid the Trout Fee and together their combined limit is 5. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Try small jigs, spinners, live bait or artificial scented baits. **Brook Trout** – Fair.

Sand Lake

Iowa residents and nonresidents who are required to have a fishing license must pay the Trout Fee to fish for or possess trout. Exception: Anglers under 16 years old may possess or fish for trout without having paid the Trout Fee if they fish with a properly licensed adult who has paid the Trout Fee and together their combined limit is 5. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Worms work best. **Brook Trout** - Good. **Black Crappie** - Fair.

Terry Trueblood Lake

You must have a fishing license and trout stamp to fish for and/or possess trout. **Brook Trout** – Fair. **Rainbow Trout** – Fair.

Union Grove Lake

The lake was refilled in the spring of 2016 and restocked at that time. Most fish are smaller, but some adult fish were also added. All docks are in. A few people have been fishing here, but no catches reported.

For more information, contact the Lake Macbride Fisheries Station at 319-624-3615.

Lake Sugema

The water temperature is in the mid to upper 40's. **Walleye** - Slow: Use jig and minnow combinations in areas with rip-rapped shorelines. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Try spinnerbaits or crankbaits along the fishing jetties and rip-rapped shorelines.

Lake Wapello

Channel Catfish - Fair: Use cut bait along the windblown shorelines. **Largemouth Bass**- Slow: Try spinnerbaits around the cedar tree piles.

Ottumwa Park Pond South

Trout were stocked on March 30th. Try small tube and twister jigs, in-line spinners or casting spoons.

Rathbun Reservoir

The current lake level is 903.66 msl. Normal operating elevation is 904.0 msl. Lake Rathbun has zebra mussels, so make sure to properly drain, clean, and dry equipment before transporting to another water body. The water temperature is in the upper 40's. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Use shad sides or cut bait on the windblown shorelines.

Red Haw Lake

Channel Catfish - Slow: Use cut bait along the windblown shorelines. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Use spinnerbaits or rubber worms in the shorelines, they will warm first in the spring.

The district includes Mahaska, Lucas, Wayne, Monroe, Appanoose, Wapello, Davis and Van Buren counties. Contact the Rathbun Fish Hatchery at 641-647-2406 with questions about fishing in south central Iowa.

SOUTHWEST

Big Creek Lake

Walleye - Fair: Walleyes are being caught off points and rip rap shorelines in the mid and lower lake. Use jig and twister tails, jig and minnow, or slow trolling minnow rigs.

Don Williams Lake

Black Crappie - Fair: Slowly troll or drift small twister tails mid-lake or just out from the east shoreline. Expect to fish through some 5-7 inch fish for the 9-10 inchers.

Lake Ahquabi

Black Crappie - Fair: Cast twister tails or minnows under a bobber around the rock jetties, fish house and trail bridge.

For more information on Central Iowa lakes and rivers, contact Andy Otting or Ben Dodd at 515-432-2823.

Cold Springs District Farm Ponds

Farm ponds can offer good spring fishing. Always get permission to fish privately owned ponds. **Bluegill** - Fair: Bluegills are still in a winter pattern and can be caught around deep structure. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Crappies are getting active before the spawning period. Look for them just off shore and around shallow structure. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: As the water temperature warms, bass become very active and can be caught with a variety of lures and plugs. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Channel catfish feed heavily in the spring on dead fish. Use cut bait or shad sides in the windy shorelines.

Farm Creek Lake

Farm Creek Lake will offer good early spring crappie fishing in the upper end as water temperatures warm.

Lake Anita

Crappie fishing should get good this week in the pontoon arm of the lake. **Black Crappie**- Fair: Cast a jig two feet under a bobber in the pontoon area of the lake. Limits of crappie are being taken on warm sunny days. **Bluegill** - Slow: A few quality size bluegills are being caught.

Lake Manawa

Warm sunny days offer good crappie fishing in the canals. Lake Manawa is also a good destination for early spring catfishing. **White Crappie** - Fair: A few crappies are being caught in the canals. Warm sunny days are best. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Fish the windy shoreline with shad sides or cut bait. Channel catfish in Manawa are all sizes.

Meadow Lake

Meadow has a good population of 10 inch black crappie.

Prairie Rose Lake

Prairie Rose will offer good panfishing this spring. The lake has quality sized bluegills and crappies are acceptable size. Target the brush piles. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Crappies are starting to be caught around the jetties and in tree piles. Fish will average 9 inches. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: There is a large population of 12 inch bass in the lake that offers fun catch and release fishing.

Viking Lake

Find early spring crappies in the campground arm and behind the pontoon area. A few bass are being caught in the deeper brush piles. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Crappies are starting to be caught behind the pontoon boats fishing a minnow under a bobber. **White Crappie** - Slow: An angler reports catching a few large white crappies in deep brush piles and around underwater reefs. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Jig plastics in deeper brush piles.

Fishing should pick up with temperatures forecasted to warm over the weekend and next week. For more information, contact the Cold Springs office at 712-769-2587.

Little River Watershed Lake

Walleye - Fair: Catch walleyes up to 22 inches with jigs tipped with a minnow or trolling along the dam. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Catch largemouth bass up to 18 inches using jigs fished near cedar tree brush piles.

Twelve Mile Creek Lake

Largemouth Bass - Slow: Largemouth bass of all sizes have been caught with jigs fished along cedar tree brush piles.

Lakes in the Mount Ayr district are 100% ice free. Water temperature in most district lakes is in the upper 40's to low 50's. For more information, please call the Mount Ayr Fisheries office at 641-464-3108.